



The Waning of the Middle Ages - Johan Huizinga

The waning of the middle ages: a study of the forms of life, thought and art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth centuries
Johan Huizinga, translated by Frederik Jan Hopman

The Waning of the Middle Ages (also known as The Autumn of the Middle Ages, or Autumntide of the Middle Ages), subtitled A study of the forms of life, thought and art in France and the Netherlands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is Johan Huizinga's most famous work. It was published in 1919 as *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen* and first translated into English in 1924. Huizinga defends the idea that the exaggerated formality and romanticism of late medieval court society was a defense mechanism against the constantly increasing violence and brutality of life. The break off between Middle Ages and Renaissance was, according to him, a period of pessimism, cultural exhaustion, and nostalgia. Even though this work has found criticism, especially for relying too heavily on evidence exclusively from the Burgundian court, it has achieved immense impact in the thought about the period. - Summary by Leni

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